



The United States Attorney's Office

Western District of Virginia

NEWS RELEASE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE WESTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

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SALEM KIK (VIRGINIA) LLC SENTENCED TO ONE-YEAR PROBATION

Company Also Ordered to Pay \$100,000 in Fines and Community Service Payments for Negligent Discharge

United States Attorney Julia C. Dudley announced today that KIK (Virginia) LLC, of Salem, Virginia, was sentenced in the United States District Court for the Western District of Virginia in Roanoke today on charges the company negligently discharged bleach into the sanitary sewer system in Salem.

Today in District Court, KIK was ordered to serve a one-year period of probation, pay a criminal fine of \$75,000 and to make \$25,000 in community service payments. In addition, the company was ordered to continue developing and implementing an environmental management system designed to prevent future environmental violations and to complete an environmental audit conducted by an independent auditor.

"Keeping our natural resources free from pollution and other dangers is something every American citizen should be concerned with," United States Attorney Julia C. Dudley said today. "However, when criminal violations occur, such as in this case, it is the duty of the United States Attorney's Office to act swiftly and responsibly to bring the violators to justice."

KIK operated a facility in Salem that manufactured bleach and other household products. On September 4, 2003, local authorities discovered elevated concentrations of bleach in the sanitary sewer lines servicing KIK's facility. An investigation revealed that at that time, and for a number of years before, under previous owners, employees at the facility washed bleach that had been spilled in the production and bottling process and off-specification bleach into the plant's floor drains. The floor drains channeled the bleach into the plant's drainage system which lead to Salem's sanitary sewer system and ultimately to Salem's waste water treatment plant, operated by the Western Virginia Water Authority.

"Illegally discharging pollutants risks harming the environment and damaging wastewater treatment plants," said David Dillon, Special Agent in Charge of EPA's criminal enforcement office in Philadelphia. "Criminal violations of our nation's environmental laws are serious

offenses and will be vigorously investigated and prosecuted."

The Clean Water Act prohibits discharges into a sewer system of any pollutants that the discharger knows could cause property damage. Bleach is a corrosive chemical that, in sufficient concentration, may damage metal and other materials used in the sewer system and is considered a pollutant under the Clean Water Act.

The case was investigated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Criminal Investigation Division (EPA), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Salem Police Department, the City of Salem Fire and EMS Department, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the Western Virginia Water Authority, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and the Salem Water and Sewer Department, all members of the Blue Ridge Environmental Task Force. The case was prosecuted by Lana Pettus, Trial Attorney for the Department of Justice, Environmental Crimes Section and Assistant United States Attorney Jennie L. M. Waering. This case demonstrates the effectiveness of the Blue Ridge Environmental Task Force which facilitates cooperative law enforcement efforts in the environmental arena.